



1. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:
  - an encoding step of encoding a speech segment by using a plurality of encoding methods for encoding the speech segment;
  - a calculation step of calculating an encoding distortion produced at said encoding step;
  - a selection step of selecting an encoding method of the plurality of encoding methods in which the encoding distortion is smallest; and
  - a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded using the encoding method selected at said selection step, in the speech segment dictionary.
2. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:
  - a first encoding step of encoding a speech segment;
  - a calculation step of calculating an encoding distortion produced at said first encoding step;
  - a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded in said first encoding step in the speech segment dictionary, in a case where the encoding distortion produced at said first encoding step is less than a predetermined value;
  - a second encoding step of encoding the speech segment, in a case where the encoding distortion produced at said first encoding step is not less than the predetermined value; and
  - a storing step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded in said second encoding step in the speech segment dictionary.

3. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a construction step of constructing quantization code books using one or more speech segments;

an encoding step of encoding a speech segment using one of the quantization code books constructed in said construction step;

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded in said encoding step in the speech segment dictionary.

5. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a selection step of selecting an encoding method of encoding a speech segment from a plurality of encoding methods;

an encoding step of encoding the speech segment by using the selected encoding method;  
and

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment in a speech segment dictionary,  
wherein one of the plurality of encoding methods uses one of a  $\mu$ -law scheme, scalar quantization, and linear predictive coding.

7. (Once Amended). A speech information processing apparatus for generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

selecting means for selecting an encoding method of encoding a speech segment from a plurality of encoding methods;

encoding means for encoding the speech segment by using the selected encoding method;

calculation means for calculating an encoding distortion produced by said encoding means;

selection means for selecting an encoding method of the plurality of encoding methods in which the encoding distortion is smallest; and

storage means for storing the encoded speech segment encoded using the encoding method selected by said selection means, in the speech segment dictionary.

13. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of synthesizing speech by using a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a decoding step of decoding the speech segment by using a plurality of decoding methods for decoding the speech segment;

a calculation step of calculating a decoding distortion produced in said decoding step;

a selection step of selecting a decoding method of the plurality of decoding methods in which the decoding distortion is smallest; and

a speech synthesizing step of synthesizing speech on the basis of the decoded speech segment decoded by the decoding method selected in said selection step.

15. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of synthesizing speech by using a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a construction step of constructing quantization code books using one or more speech segments;

an encoding step of encoding a speech segment using one of the quantization code books constructed in said construction step;

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded in said encoding step in the

speech segment dictionary.

17. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of synthesizing speech by using a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a selection step of selecting an encoding method of encoding a speech segment from a plurality of encoding methods;

an encoding step of encoding the speech segment by using the selected encoding method;  
and

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment in a speech segment dictionary,  
wherein one of the plurality of decoding methods uses one of a  $\mu$  law scheme, scalar quantization, and linear predictive coding.

19. (Once Amended). A speech information processing apparatus for synthesizing speech by using a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

decoding means for decoding the speech segment by using a decoding step of decoding the speech segment by using a plurality of decoding methods for decoding the speech segment;

calculation means for calculating a decoding distortion produced by said decoding means;

selection means for selecting a decoding method of the plurality of decoding methods in which the decoding distortion is smallest; and

speech synthesizing means for synthesizing speech on the basis of the decoded speech segment decoded by the decoding method selected by said selection means.

On page 54, line 24, please insert -- In step S1305, the flow branches on the basis of the result of step S1303. -- before "If".

On page 54, line 25, please insert -- If not, the flow proceeds to step S1309. -- after "S1306."

On page 55, line 12, please insert -- In step S1309, the flow branches on the basis of the result of step S1303. -- before "If".

On page 55, line 26, please insert --If not, the flow proceeds to step S1313. -- after "S1318."

On page 58, line 25, please insert -- In step S1407, the flow branches on the basis of the result of step S1406. -- before "If".

On page 59, line 1, please insert -- If not, the flow proceeds to step S1408. -- before "In".

On page 59, line 4, please insert -- In step S1408, the flow branches on the basis of the result of step S1406. -- before "In".

On page 59, line 5, please insert -- If not, the flow proceeds to step S1409. -- after "S1414."

On page 59, line 11, please insert -- In step S1409, the flow branches on the basis of the result of step S1406. -- before "In".

On page 59, line 12, please insert -- If not, the flow proceeds to step S1410. -- after "S1412."

On the first line of the Abstract, please change "N speech" to --Speech--.